

Explanatory Statement

Proposed Text Change to Amend §6 (Non-Conforming Uses, Buildings & Lots) by adding §6-7 (Renovation of Nursing Home or Skilled Nursing Facility).

Purpose/Benefits

To help maintain, enhance, and meet the growing need for Senior Housing options, and to help redevelop existing nonconforming nursing home or skilled nursing facility, we are proposing to amend:

- §6 by adding a new section, §6-7, and standards for renovation and expansion of and existing building legally being used as nursing home or skilled nursing facility.

The changes also serve to address several goals and strategies highlighted in the Westport Plan of Conservation and Development, including:

1.4.3 Promote Good Design, A Community Design, p. 30

- Maintain an architectural review process to help preserve and enhance the character of Westport and maintain the overall “sense of place.”

2.9.4 Improve Business Areas Along Route 1 p.76

- Require all new or redeveloped sites along the Post Road to install sidewalks and provide landscaping in ways to enhance the Post Road.
- Seek ways to modify the Zoning Regulations to encourage appropriate improvements and/or redevelopment along the Post Road, p. 78
- Revisit the parking ratio for business uses since:
 - i. Requiring more parking spaces than are needed increases impervious coverage and reduces economic development and/or landscaping opportunities, and
 - ii. Reducing the parking requirements may open up the opportunity for redevelopment of some parcels and result in improved buildings, more landscaping, access management, and other desirable outcomes.
- Consider the potential for some properties on the Post Road to accommodate mixed-use buildings and/or mixed-use developments (containing housing) in order to increase the variety of housing choices in locations with access to shopping and public transportation.

3.10.1 Overview (“Westport’s wide variety of housing types from modest homes and historic structures to grand manor homes is one of its strongest features.”), p. 79.

4.10.2 Maintain Residential Character, p. 80

- Protecting residential neighborhoods from encroachment by inappropriate uses, and
- Managing residential development and redevelopment and other activities on residential properties to ensure they are appropriate for the site and/or given the impacts on neighbors.

5.10.4. Monitor Changing Housing Needs, p.85

- Seek ways to address changing housing needs while maintaining the character and integrity of Westport.

Summary of Proposed Text Changes

The following summarizes the proposed changes and their potential application on the Demonstration Site.

§6-7 Renovation of Existing Nursing Home or Skilled Nursing Facility

§6-7 Create outline standards/qualifications to modify/expand existing Nursing Homes or skilled nursing facilities, as of June 1, 2022 to a medical institution and/or facility specializing in the care of residents living with Alzheimer's, Dementia and/or memory impairment.

§6-7.1 -- §6-7.4 - Create appropriate setback, height, coverage, and floor area standards while allowing flexibility for the design and to maintain, enhance, and encourage renovations of nursing home or skilled nursing facility.

- Setback standards are included to permit some flexibility of design for redeveloping sites to accommodate the requirements of medical institutions and/or facilities specializing in the care of residents living with Alzheimer's, Dementia and/or memory impairment. Accessory structures, including but not limited to, mechanical equipment, and trash enclosures, shall be set back at least 30 feet from Public Streets and at least 5 feet from all other lot lines.
- The proposed height standard provides flexibility for additions to the principle building at the same height and stories of the existing structure.
- In order to provide the necessary flexibility to accommodate the needs of medical institutions and/or facilities specializing in the care of residents living with Alzheimer's, Dementia and/or memory impairment we are proposing to allow a 5% Building Coverage increase over existing conditions provided that Total Coverage is reduced by at least two (2) times the increase Building Coverage.
- To encourage redevelopment, we are proposing to allow up to a 10% increase in Floor Area over existing conditions and removing the limitation of a max floor area per floor.

Site Demonstration

Similar to the Pre-Application submitted on March 21, 2022, the demonstration property is 1 Burr Road (C09-089-000), consisting of 0.90 acres of land located at the corner of Burr Road and Post Road West. The site is currently developed with a single three-story building and surface parking around the perimeter of the development. The property is located in the RORD-1 Zoning District and the current development has been in continuous use since the 1960s as a skilled nursing facility or nursing home, currently with 120 beds. The property and building are currently lawfully non-conforming with respect to many of the Zoning Regulations. The building and its landscaping are worn and tired compared to the surrounding neighborhood. The current tenant, Westport Rehabilitation Complex, provides short-term inpatient rehabilitation services as well as longer-term services.

We understood from the Pre-Application that the new plan was generally well received, and this proposed Text Amendment is the next step to get the process going. With the implementation of this Text, the applicant will have the opportunity to redevelop the site into a modern medical institution and/or facility specializing in the care of residents living with Alzheimer's, Dementia and/or memory impairment. This Facility will adaptively reuse the existing building, infill a small portion of first floor space, and involve minor 2nd & 3rd floor additions, relocation of mechanicals to the roof, new mansard roof, parking and landscape improvements, and a new brick façade more in keeping with the surrounding neighborhood. The total bed count will be reduced from 120 to 68 allowing for better privacy and enhanced day to day operations. This allows for better distancing within the facility and improved quality of living and care. Driveways, curb cuts and landscaping would also be improved from current conditions including an increase in green space.